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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 000474

SIPDIS

STATE PASS AIT/W

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TW](#) [TIP](#)

SUBJECT: TAIWAN TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 009756

1. (SBU) AIT Acting Deputy Director Chuck Bennett delivered reftel Trafficking in Persons (TIP) talking points on February 2 to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Administrative Vice Minister and the Ministry of Interior (MOI) Administrative Deputy Minister. AIT Political Section Chief James Huskey delivered the TIP demarche talking points on February 3 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) North American Department Director General.

Ministry of Justice

2. (SBU) In response to the demarche, MOJ Vice Minister Yen Da-ho told AIT that most of the TIP concerns we raised fall under the jurisdiction of the MOI and not the MOJ. He assured AIT that MOJ is very serious about TIP issues and wants to cooperate with the U.S. Yen pointed out that the new MOJ Minister, Hung Mao-lin, had specifically mentioned the problem of TIP during his February 1 arrival speech at MOJ, stating that TIP is a crime and that it not only gives Taiwan a bad image abroad, but is itself a basic human rights issue. Beijing's reluctance to repatriate Mainland Chinese women on a regular basis, Vice-Minister Yen explained, contributes to overcrowding at Taiwan detention facilities. Nevertheless, he continued, conditions at Taiwan's illegal immigrant detention centers have been improved and several NGOs are working with the women.

3. (SBU) AIT told Vice Minister Yen that Washington stands ready to assist the Taiwan authorities at any time with TIP training, cooperation, or any other assistance needed to improve the TIP situation in Taiwan. The Vice Minister thanked AIT and said his office will stay in contact with AIT on this issue.

Ministry of Interior

4. (SBU) In response to the demarche, MOI Deputy Minister Chien Tai-lang told AIT that MOI has already begun to make improvements on the TIP issue. Since December 2004, Chien said Taiwan authorities have increased efforts to distinguish between TIP victims and non-victims at the detention centers. MOI is now placing confirmed victims in a separate area with better facilities and placing them on a priority repatriation list. In response to AIT's request for elaboration, Deputy Minister Chien explained that a judge must determine if a detainee is a TIP victim and once that determination has been made, the court assigns the victim to the separate area where they have access to better care, including counseling services. Echoing MOJ Vice Minister Yen, Chien stated that that PRC unwillingness to repatriate Mainland women detained in Taiwan on a regular basis continues to exacerbate the situation.

5. (SBU) AIT acknowledged that the PRC's unwillingness to repatriate Mainland women held in detention centers places Taiwan in a difficult position. Deputy Minister Chien responded that Taiwan hopes Washington will urge Beijing to be more cooperative on the TIP issue. He thanked AIT and said he clearly understood the concerns raised by AIT.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

6. (SBU) In response to the demarche, MOFA's North America Director General Victor Chin stated that Taiwan takes the TIP issue very seriously and wants to cooperate with the U.S. on this issue. He assured AIT that his department would work to ensure that other government agencies are aware of the TIP concerns raised by AIT and active in resolving any problems. TIP, he explained, has become a high-profile issue in Taiwan, and Taiwanese NGOs are already working with TIP victims at detention centers. Like Yen and Chien, he explained that the TIP issue in Taiwan is rendered more difficult by PRC unwillingness to accept the return of Mainland women without proper documents. He also emphasized the problem Taiwan authorities have in differentiating actual trafficking victims from the large number of illegal immigrants seeking economic opportunities, as virtually all detainees claim to be trafficking victims.

17. (SBU) AIT thanked Chin for his assistance in relaying our concerns to other government offices. Chin directed his department section chiefs present to stay engaged on this issue and work closely with AIT.

18. (SBU) AIT will continue to provide G/TIP with any updates or additional information on Taiwan's progress on the TIP issue.

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